

**[Sanchez letterhead]**

Michael K. Powell  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

**MB Docket No. 04-207**

Dear Chairman Powell:

I am writing to you today to express my concern about an issue that strikes a particular chord in my district – the current debate over an a la carte cable system. It is my opinion that, while the intentions of many of those supporting a la carte may be admirable, the unintended consequences of such a system would be to eliminate most of the diversity that has flowered on cable in the last few years.

Many of the residents in my district are of Hispanic descent. Many live in homes in which at least one person speaks little to no English. The ability to turn on the television and find programming that incorporates and reflects Hispanic-American culture, both in English and Spanish, is not one we take for granted.

It was not so long ago that the only time one saw Hispanics on television was either in a baseball game or in a movie about gang members. For those searching for Spanish-language programming, they were lucky to find even one station offering such programming.

With the explosion of cable offerings today, Hispanics are much more likely to find programming that truly reflects the Hispanic experience in America. Most popular cable stations offer a separate Spanish-language channel (ESPN Deportes, CNN en Español and Discovery en Español, to name a few) and Hispanics can even tune into programs from Mexico, Central America, South America and the Caribbean.

Perhaps even more importantly, Americans who have little personal contact with Hispanics and Hispanic culture still have the ability to learn about Hispanic life and see accurate portrayals simply with a flip of the dial.

A number of telecommunications and entertainment industry experts have explained that if we were to switch to an a la carte system, many of these Hispanic-oriented stations simply could not survive on the advertising revenues they would get based on a much smaller subscriber base. And many other channels would never even have the opportunity to launch. Finally, most Americans who opt not to pay for such “ethnic” channels would never channel surf their way onto a program where they can learn something about a different culture or way of life.

Americans already tend to live in highly segregated neighborhoods. Must our television viewing be segregated as well?

Please do not support an “a la carte” system that will destroy the diversity on cable television we have all worked so hard to build.

Sincerely,

Loretta Sanchez  
Member of Congress